

Conference Report

Onnecting Communities.

Creating Opportunities.

Oelivering Technology Access
to America's Communities

Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference

June 29-July 1, 2005 * Lake Buena Vista, Florida

Office of Multifamily Housing Programs
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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Dear Neighborhood Networks Conference Attendee:

I am pleased to announce that the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference was a tremendous success. More than 430 Neighborhood Networks stakeholders, including property owners and managers, residents, center staff, volunteers, partners, exhibitors, and HUD staff, attended this one-of-a-kind event held June 29 to July 1 in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in this enriching, informative, and exciting conference. The feedback from the conference evaluations was very positive and constructive. Such a successful conference would not have been possible without a wonderful and talented cast of speakers and panelists who all deserve special thanks.

This year's conference, Connecting Communities, Creating Opportunities, provided many highlights and a wealth of materials and resources. This conference report contains day-by-day highlights, including photos and session descriptions. An overview of the awards presented at the recognition ceremony is included, as well as contact information for attendees, speakers and exhibitors.

I hope you find the information useful, and I look forward to working with you as we begin a new decade of Delivering Technology Access to America's Communities.

Sincerely,

Delores A. Pruden

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Director, Multifamily Neighborhood Networks

Conference Overview



Sponsored by HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing Programs, the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference provided participants an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss the latest techniques, strategies, and tools for building and sustaining Neighborhood Networks centers. The conference, which was held at the Hilton Hotel in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, from June 29 to July 1, 2005, brought together stakeholders from the more than 1,100 Neighborhood Networks centers that are in operation across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Over 430 Neighborhood Networks property owners and managers, residents, center staff, volunteers, partners, exhibitors, and HUD staff attended the conference. Participants traveled from as far away as Hawaii and Alaska—with a total of 39 states represented.

Overall, more than 20 sessions and workshops were offered on a variety of topics, such as resource development, fundraising, grant writing techniques, creating and leveraging partnerships, and program design. To complement the workshops, exhibitors presented cutting-edge resources and products of special interest to Neighborhood Networks centers. These exciting events and many more helped make the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference a success.

The following is a brief summary of some highlights from the conference. Detailed information and day-by-day descriptions follow this overview.

Pre-conference, June 28

Three separate pre-conference sessions were held on Tuesday, June 28. Each of these three pre-conference sessions provided original ideas and proven strategies for sustaining centers, and participants from many backgrounds were able to benefit. The first of these was an orientation session for new Neighborhood Networks centers, where information was shared about programming, operations, and the benefits of joining the Neighborhood Networks Initiative. A Comprehensive Grantwriting series of workshops was also hosted, which drew an overwhelming number of participants. This session began with basic grantwriting tips, and gradually increased in intensity throughout the course of the conference. Finally, attending HUD

Staff participated in a training session specifically tailored to HUD Staff responsibilities, including the newly introduced Center Classification process, the START business plan tool, and marketing Neighborhood Networks Centers to property owners and managers.

Opening Day, June 29

Following a dramatic patriotic opening courtesy of Walt Disney World Presentation Services, National Director Delores Pruden welcomed attendees to the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference. Two strong Neighborhood



Networks supporters, Robert Reavis, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Atlanta, Georgia Office and Gene Lockard, Regional Vice President of Wingate Management, delivered remarks affirming their commitment to Neighborhood Networks and shared how beneficial the Initiative has been in their communities.

To further highlight the speakers' comments, vignettes using real-life examples of successes in Neighborhood Networks centers were shared during this and other general sessions. One of these vignettes highlighted the efforts of the Interfaith Homes Neighborhood Networks Center Director, Beverly Brown, and her staff in Kalamazoo, Michigan. This Neighborhood Networks center has been in existence for nearly a decade and has helped more than 100 residents obtain jobs. A brief story, including photos of the center's success, was displayed.

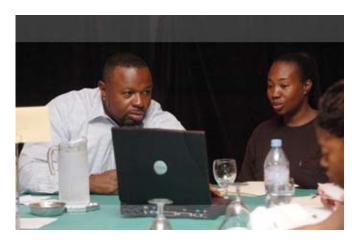
Also spotlighted during the opening session was Dr. Rudy Garcia, Director of Experiential Learning at the Albuquerque TVI Community College. Dr. Garcia partnered with a Neighborhood Networks center in New Mexico and allowed his students to work at the Neighborhood Networks center for college credits.

Bill Strickland, President and CEO of Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and Bidwell Training Centers, delivered an inspiring keynote address during the general session luncheon, entitled *From Employment Opportunities to Economic Empowerment*. Mr. Strickland shared the story of how his organization became a national model for education, training, and hope. His powerful message of creating social change and individual success through the arts, sciences, entrepreneurship, and community partnerships, resonated with and inspired conference participants.

A Special Session was held to announce the newly formed Neighborhood Networks National Consortium (NNNC). This independent, non-profit organization brings together Neighborhood Networks consortia and centers for a common cause—supporting the sustainability of Neighborhood Networks centers throughout the United States. The NNNC was launched with the unveiling of a new logo, the introduction of the NNNC Board, and the cutting of a commemorative cake. Following the session, the NNNC held its first general meeting inviting all conference participants to learn more about the consortium and provide feedback to help guide its strategic planning.

Day Two, June 30

The morning general session entitled *Funding Strategies for Sustainable Growth*, discussed the many resources centers can utilize to enhance their financial sustainability. Representatives from the Beaumont



Foundation, Office Depot, the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and Events by Knight discussed many diverse approaches to securing and sustaining financial resources during this interactive session.

Attendees were invited during their lunch hour to *Lunch and Learn*. Neighborhood Networks stakeholders from across the country held peer-to-peer roundtable discussions with other attendees interested in learning new ideas in identified topic areas. This proved to be a popular and mutually beneficial time for conference participants to learn from one another and network.

A Special Seminar was held to unveil "Center Classification". During this general session, attendees learned about the new classification process that offers benchmarks as a guide for maintaining and/or improving Neighborhood Networks center programming, evaluation, financial sustainability, partnerships, technology assessment and resident involvement.

The day concluded with a *Dinner and Recognition Ceremony*, which highlighted the special contributions of remarkable individuals and outstanding organizations that have supported the Initiative over the past decade. More than 30 awards were presented. Trayvia White, a youth from the Rainbow Terrace Apartments in Cleveland, Ohio, read a touching poem about her Neighborhood Networks center during the ceremony.

Closing Day, July 1

The closing session on Friday morning was entitled Technology in Everyday Lives, and featured speakers from the Mattie Koonce Learning and Technology Center, SimChicago.com, SimDesk Technologies, Inc., and Eastwind Consulting. These technology experts discussed the latest trends in technology and how technology has changed lives.

Immediately following the conference, participants were invited by NASA on a special tour of the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral.





Pre-conference sessions, June 28

HUD Staff Training

More than 30 HUD staff participated in a full day of training in topics such as Center Classification, START (both classroom and online), marketing for HUD Neighborhood Networks Coordinators, and interesting topics presented by HUD staff Elaine Bennett, Senior Project Manager, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Columbia, South Carolina Office, Tarrie Eckhart, Service Coordinator SuperNOFA Lottery Grants Program, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Seattle, Washington Office, Sarah Richey-Johnson, Program Manager, Neighborhood Networks Staff, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Peggy Spaner, Project Manager, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Buffalo, New York Office.

Grantwriting

This three-part session was devoted entirely to grantwriting. The session began with an introduction to the essential concepts of grantwriting, and continued into more advanced techniques. Small interactive group lessons ensured that all attendees received the individual instruction required to identify, apply for, and write a winning grant proposal. This hands-on session prepared participants to be successful grant writers. Because of the overwhelming response received for this session, attendees assigned themselves to either a Beginner or Intermediate series.

New Center Orientation

Center staff, owners and managers, and residents of properties with new Neighborhood Networks centers were invited to participate in this special session designed to provide valuable information about programming, operations, the benefits of Neighborhood Networks, and more. This interactive workshop provided a

wealth of information to new and seasoned Neighborhood Networks staff.

Day One: Wednesday, June 29

Opening Session

The Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference began with the presentation of colors by the University of Central Florida Air Force ROTC and a stunning version of the Star-Spangled Banner performed by Tiffany Coburn of Orlando, Florida.

Ferdinand Juluke, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Jacksonville, Florida Office, welcomed conference participants to Florida and thanked attendees for their support. Mr. Juluke highlighted 60 Neighborhood Networks centers that opened during the first year of the Initiative and are still serving residents today.





Robert Reavis, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Atlanta, Georgia Office, read a special conference letter on behalf of Stillman Knight, Jr., HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary for Multifamily Housing. In his letter, Deputy Assistant Secretary Knight referred to Neighborhood Networks as one of HUD's signature programs. As a supporter of Neighborhood Networks since its inception in 1995, Mr. Reavis shared some of his personal Neighborhood Networks experiences, including stories about the success of the Operation P.E.A.C.E. Neighborhood Networks center in Atlanta, Georgia. He emphasized that determination and commitment to a center—and the residents that use it—can facilitate self-sufficiency and empower lives.

Delores Pruden hosted the premiere of the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary video, Neighborhood Networks: Opportunities Imagined and Achieved. The video includes interviews with residents, center staff, HUD staff, partners, volunteers, and property owners and managers, and was filmed in New Orleans, Louisiana; St. Paul, Minnesota; Stockton, California; and Washington, D.C. The inspiring video captured perfectly the session's theme, Celebrating a Decade of Delivering Technology Access to America's Communities. A copy of the video was distributed to all conference attendees, and additional copies have been provided to all other Neighborhood Networks centers, as well.

Following the video, Ms. Pruden provided a historical background on the Neighborhood Networks Initiative, noting that in 1995, Neighborhood Networks became one of the first federal initiatives to improve technology access and promote self-sufficiency for residents living in low- and moderate-income communities. A decade after its inception, Neighborhood Networks remains at the forefront of Delivering Technology Access to America's Communities.

Vignettes, which highlighted real life successes and included pictures and statements from center staff, were featured throughout the general sessions to enhance the presentations of the speakers and provide examples for other centers to emulate. In this session, the stories of Beverly Brown, Center Director of the Interfaith Homes Neighborhood Networks Center in Kalamazoo, Michigan; Claudia Washington, teacher and resident at Restoration Towers in Detroit, Michigan; and Dr. Rudy Garcia, Director of Experiential Learning at TVI Community College in Albuquerque, New Mexico were shared.



Gene Lockard, Regional Vice President of Wingate Management Company, detailed the remarkable story of the Operation P.E.A.C.E. Neighborhood Networks center in Atlanta, Georgia. One of two Neighborhood Networks centers sponsored by Wingate Management, Operation P.E.A.C.E. became a Neighborhood Networks center in 1995 and still thrives today. Mr. Lockard explained how this distinguished Neighborhood Networks center, under the direction of Center Director Edna Moffett, has had a tremendous impact on hundreds of lives and its surrounding community.

Exhibitors

After the Opening session, Ms. Pruden invited all of the conference attendees to the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference Exhibit Hall, where she cut a ribbon to allow access to exhibitors. These organizations included Neighborhood Networks consortia and centers that were eager to share their success and products with other Neighborhood Networks stakeholders.

Throughout the conference, topical clinics were presented by subject experts in the exhibit hall. Clinics included one-on-one and small group information sessions aimed at helping centers to strengthen their programs and operations.

Topics included:

- Partnership Opportunities with Ticket to Work
- Youth and Teen Digital Media Programs
- Creating Your Online Presence: The Basics of Web Development
- Discrimination in Florida: Where to Go for Help
- Grant Writing Questions and Answers
- Technology Planning: One on One
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP): Opportunities for Seniors
- Consortia Development
- Center Classification
- Strategic Tracking and Reporting Tool (START)
- Office of University Partnerships: Networking Neighborhoods with their Universities

A cyber café was also set up in the exhibit hall to allow attendees to check their e-mail.



Morning sessions included:

- Comprehensive Grant Writing Part II
- Act Locally
- Get STARTed with Strategic Planning
- Becoming a Tax-Exempt Organization
- Creating Economic Opportunities and Wealth Building
- Strategies for Engaging Residents
- NASA Train-the-Trainer

Afternoon sessions included:

- Comprehensive Grant Writing Part III
- The Business of Managing Tax-Exempt Status
- Creating Opportunities for Immigrant Communities
- Strategies for Engaging Residents
- U.S. Department of Labor Train-the-Trainer

Please see conference Workshop Summaries for detailed information about each session.





From Employment Opportunities to Economic Empowerment Luncheon

Encarnacion "Connie" Loukatos, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Office, moderated the luncheon, *From Employment Opportunities to Economic Empowerment*. Ms. Loukatos explained that Neighborhood Networks centers provide more than just job training. In fact, many Neighborhood Networks centers provide access to economic opportunities that transform the lives of low-income families. To connect center users to employment opportunities and economic power, center staff require an understanding of the local marketplace and the ability to translate that understanding into tangible outcomes. Ms. Loukatos introduced the speakers who discussed the importance of leveraging partnerships with employers and providing market-driven training programs to create economic empowerment for residents.

Jacqueline Jones of Interstate Realty Management spoke about workforce development and forging local partnerships. Ms. Jones shared her strategies and success in managing workforce development programs and the dramatic impact they have on resident users at Interstate Realty Management's 36 Neighborhood Networks centers.



Keynote speaker Bill Strickland, President and CEO of Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and Bidwell Training Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, delivered a powerful message about giving people respect and the tools they need—and then watching them perform miraculous deeds. Mr. Strickland told the story of how an impoverished center in Pittsburgh's north-side Manchester neighborhood was transformed into one of the most exciting and successful organizations in America. The facility includes a 350-seat performing arts music/lecture hall, library, art studios and labs, lunchroom facilities, an IBM center, and specially designed classrooms for vocational training. The center is known for its renowned culinary arts program and as a performing center for some of the

best jazz artists in the world. Mr. Strickland urged conference participants to believe firmly in what they are doing and think creatively to open doors to opportunity.

Neighborhood Networks National Consortium Inaugural

The Neighborhood Networks National Consortium (NNNC) is finally here, and conference participants joined in the official inaugural event. Trends in recent years have shown that increased competition for funding has forced many centers to form consortia to secure funding, and a National Consortium should prove even more effective in accessing opportunities for Neighborhood Networks centers. Participants learned about the many benefits of National Consortium membership, including the potential for funding and other resources on a national scale.

Delores Pruden discussed the importance of the consortium, which represents 16 Neighborhood Networks consortia around the country, and acknowledged the NNNC Board of Directors.

NNNC Board of Directors members include:

- Consortium President Thaddeus Miles of MassIMPACT in Boston, Massachusetts
- Consortium Vice President Jessica Venegas of the National Capital Area Neighborhood Networks Consortium in Washington, D.C.
- Consortium Treasurer Miles Graham of the Community Builders of Arkansas in Little Rock, Arkansas

- Consortium Secretary Matthew J. Francis of the Colorado Neighborhood Networks Consortium in Denver, Colorado
- Joseph Diehl of Digital Promise in Seattle, Washington
- Walter Gillespie of the Illinois Neighborhood Networks Consortium in Chicago, Illinois
- Craig Knudsvig of the Continental Homes and LaGrave Learning Center in Grand Forks, North Dakota



- Dipo Mosadomi of the Southern Louisiana Neighborhood Networks Consortium in New Orleans, Louisiana
- Frewin Osteen of the Alabama Neighborhood Networks Consortium in Prichard, Alabama

Joe Diehl of Digital Promise, the Seattle area Neighborhood Networks consortia, spoke about his consortium. Miles Graham of the Community Builders of Arkansas discussed the successes of a consortium in a rural setting. National Consortium President Thaddeus Miles and Vice President Jessica Venegas discussed the new Neighborhood Networks National Consortium vision, mission, and core objectives.

Following the official consortium launch, the NNNC held a general meeting to seek input from conference attendees about its direction for strategic planning and membership outreach. For more information about the Neighborhood Networks National Consortium, please visit http://www.nationalnnc.org/.

Day Two: Thursday, June 30

General Session

The opening session on day two was entitled Fundraising Strategies for Sustainable Growth. Moderated by Mary Ann Henderson, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Baltimore, Maryland Office, vignettes were used to highlight Neighborhood Networks centers' success in fundraising. The first featured Sonya Manners, Director of Dartmouth Square Neighborhood Networks Center in Inkster, Michigan, who wrote a winning grant worth \$24,000 from the Beaumont Foundation of America. The Beaumont Foundation provided the center



with a mobile computer lab, including 10 new laptop computers, one digital projector, two digital cameras with memory cards, a laser printer, and other hardware. Second, Karen Voiss, Resident Services Manager at the Neighborhood Networks Center at Aloha Park Apartments in Aloha, Oregon, was featured for winning several grants for the Neighborhood Networks Center at Aloha Park Apartments, including awards from the Home Depot Foundation and Washington Mutual.

Each panelist for this session brought a different perspective on how a Neighborhood Networks center can successfully raise funds. Bill Knight of Events by Knight discussed the supply/vendor side of producing an event, the duty of an organizer, and attracting individual donors. Paulette Maehara of the Association of Fundraising Professionals spoke about the importance of individual giving, identifying opportunities, and cultivating opportunities. Virginia Peoples of the Beaumont Foundation emphasized diversified funding, community outreach, and networking. Finally, Mary Wong of Office Depot emphasized the importance of running a Neighborhood Networks center as a business.

A question-and-answer period followed the discussion.

Sessions

Morning sessions included:

- Making Your Mark with Mature Learners
- Strategies for Engaging Residents
- U.S. Department of Education (ED) Train-the-Trainer
- Community Enterprises
- Technology Planning
- Transition Planning
- Comprehensive Grant Writing: Intermediate

Afternoon sessions included:

- Act Locally
- Connecting Your Center to Community Volunteers
- Get STARTed with Strategic Planning
- Educational Programs from Preschool to High School
- Write It Right: Tips and Tools for Grant Writing Success
- Financial Literacy

Please see conference Workshop Summaries for detailed information about each session.

Special Seminar: Center Classification

Starting in 2005, Neighborhood Networks centers will be able to elevate their status through a classification process. Participants were introduced to a new system featuring three levels of classification corresponding to three different levels of achievement:

- The Designated (Level 1) center classification establishes minimum achievable standards for Multifamily Neighborhood Networks centers. This designation denotes that the center has the tools for creating effective programs and services to support the self-sufficiency of residents of FHA insured and assisted properties and the sustainability of the center.
- The Certified (Level 2) Multifamily Neighborhood Networks centers have achieved and exceeded Designated status and actively operate programs designed to support residents' self-sufficiency.
- The Model (Level 3) Multifamily Neighborhood Networks center classification is based on a combination of achievements of Designated and Certified standards and, additionally, achievement



of mandatory Model standards. Model Multifamily Neighborhood Networks centers serve as centers of excellence for the entire Neighborhood Networks Initiative.

The benefits and incentives of classification and the standards required for each level were discussed by Veralee Liban, Neighborhood Networks Project Director for DB Consulting Group; Steve McLaine, Neighborhood Networks Project Manager for Aspen Systems Corporation; and Stacey Jones-Speight, Neighborhood Networks Systems Manager for Aspen Systems Corporation. For more information about Center Classification, please visit the Neighborhood Networks web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org.

Recognition Ceremony

The high energy and bright spirit of the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference was captured during the Dinner and Recognition Ceremony. The event provided the opportunity to say thank you to property owners and managers, residents, volunteers, center staff, partners, consortia and HUD staff for their remarkable contributions to the Neighborhood Networks Initiative.

More than 30 awards were presented. Nominations had previously been solicited from Neighborhood Networks centers, consortia, partners, property owners and managers, and HUD staff, and over 160 nominations in eight award categories were received. Appendix C contains a list of all of the award winners.

Herman Ransom, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Kansas City, Kansas Office, hosted the ceremony. Before the award presentations began, Albert J. Browne, Jr., Vice President and Director of Community Development Programs at the Community Preservation and Development Corporation (CPDC) in Washington, D.C., inspired attendees with an impassioned address about Neighborhood Networks centers acting as catalysts for change. He shared his experiences creating the Gateway at Edgewood Terrace in 1995 and how it helped transform the troubled community that was once called "Little Beirut" by residents. He also highlighted a similar dramatic community change in Seattle spurred by development of a Neighborhood Networks center at the Martin Luther King (MLK) Apartments, which had been described by the Seattle Times as "kind of a drive-through drug emporium."

At Edgewood Terrace and at MLK, Neighborhood Networks centers played an important role in dispelling despair and helping people to see possibilities when there did not seem to be any.

Dr. Randal Pinkett, President and Chief Executive Officer of BCT Partners in Newark, New Jersey, delivered the evening's keynote address. Dr. Pinkett engaged the audience with a powerful and pointed critique of the current funding environment and waning support for technology access programs across the country. Yet, he stressed the Neighborhood Networks Initiative never stopped gaining momentum amidst all the challenges, and that it continues to be a technology movement that effects change. Dr. Pinkett applauded Neighborhood Networks centers for their enormous contributions to communities and for the dramatic impact they have on individual lives.

Following the award presentations, Neighborhood Networks participants were treated to a special 10th Anniversary cake and an evening of dancing and entertainment provided by a live band. The dancing was initiated with a waltz by special guests Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

A listing of award winners can be found in Appendix C.





Day Three: Friday, July 1

General Session

The final day's morning session, Technology in Everyday Life, brought together leading technology experts to discuss the latest trends in technology. Claudette Tucker Fung-a-Fat, Executive Director of the Mattie Koonce Learning and Technology Center; Bruce Montgomery, Director of SimChicago.com; Patti Colbert, Community Relations of SimDesk Technologies, Inc.; and Cornel Stewart, Director of Technology for Eastwind Consulting, discussed how technology has changed the way that Americans live their lives and the ways that Neighborhood Networks centers serve their residents. The session gave conference participants innovative ideas to help residents employ technology to transform their lives.

Cornel Stewart of Eastwind Consulting spoke about transforming a Neighborhood Networks center from a workplace to a place of learning. Bruce Montgomery of SimDesk encouraged creative thinking, community empowerment, and dependence on technology. Patti Colbert of SimDesk touched on the baby boomers and how technology companies should listen to community needs. Claudette Tucker Fung-a-Fat of the Mattie Koonce Learning and Technology Center discussed focusing on younger age groups, connecting seniors to youth, and providing a variety of programs.

Sessions

Morning sessions included:

- Minimum Investment. Maximum Returns.
- Planning for Fundraising Success
- Market-Driven Approaches to Workforce Development
- Make it Fabulous!
- Federal Deposit Insurance (FDIC) Train-the-Trainer
- Comprehensive Grant Writing: Intermediate



Please see conference Workshop Summaries for detailed information about each session.

Following the morning's morning sessions, the conference was officially adjourned.

Post-Conference Event: Kennedy Space Center Tour

Following the conference adjournment, many attendees accepted NASA's invitation and participated in an exclusive tour of the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral. Participants were taken on a bus tour through the space center—stopping for a fascinating look at NASA's amazing work.

The tour was organized through the special partnership between Neighborhood Networks and NASA. For the past several years, NASA has hosted live Web casts and sponsored other special events in support of Neighborhood Networks.

Conference Workshop Summaries



During the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary National Training Conference, more than 20 workshops and sessions were held on a variety of topics, including grant writing, technology planning, funding strategies, and financial literacy. The following workshop summaries provide a brief overview of each session. Many of these sessions were moderated by HUD staff, including:

- Ulyses Bridges, Director, Field Asset Management Division, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Tarrie Eckhart, Service Coordinator SuperNOFA Lottery Grants Program, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Seattle, Washington Office
- Charlie Famuliner, Multifamily Program Center Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Richmond, Virginia Office
- Donald Freeman, Housing Contract Services Specialist, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Los Angeles, California Office
- Mary Ann Henderson, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Baltimore, Maryland Office
- Rosalinda Lamberty, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Buffalo, New York Office
- Encarnacion "Connie" Loukatos, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Office
- Maria Lana-Queen, Manager, HOPE VI Community and Supportive Services, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Shirley Machonis, Project Manager, Neighborhood Networks Staff, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- William Miecuna, Project Manager, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, New York, New York Office
- Robert Reavis, Hub Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Atlanta, Georgia Office
- J. David Reeves, Field Office Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C. Office
- Sarah Richey-Johnson, Program Manager, Neighborhood Networks Staff, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Peggy Spaner, Project Manager, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Buffalo, New York Office
- Frederick Tombar III, Assistant Deputy Assistant Secretary for Multifamily Housing Programs, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



Concurrent Workshops

Act Locally

Everyday, in communities across America, local Neighborhood Networks partners make significant contributions and provide valuable resources to Neighborhood Networks centers. Developing and managing a successful partnership requires common interests/objectives, effective and ongoing communication, clearly defined measurable goals, tracking and evaluation, and strategies for ongoing improvement.

Dr. Rudy Garcia of the Albuquerque TVI Community College in Albuquerque, New Mexico discussed service learning, working with community colleges, and partnerships with grant writers. Brenda Chrisman of the Orange County, Florida One-Stop Career Center highlighted the U.S. Department of Labor's One-Stop Program and the great opportunities it provides for the community. Miles Graham of United Property Management spoke about developing local partnerships from a rural standpoint. He emphasized partnering with local trade schools, finding creative ways to participate in center activities, and the importance of meeting people in the community to establish partnerships.

Get STARTed with Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is essential to the effective operation of a Neighborhood Networks center. The Strategic Tracking And Reporting Tool (START) is a resource developed by HUD to assist centers with planning, tracking, and reporting information about a center's mission, programs, partnerships, operations, funding, and much more. The workshop was designed to guide participants through the strategic planning process and provide hands-on training on the use of START.

Cassandra Caldwell of Caldwell and Associates; Silvia Benavides, Neighborhood Networks Business Plan Coordinator for Aspen Systems Corporation; and Stacey Jones-Speight, Neighborhood Networks Systems Manager for Aspen Systems Corporation led the interactive, online workshop.

Becoming a Tax-Exempt Organization

There are many advantages to obtaining tax-exempt status; however, it is important that center stakeholders understand its implications. This workshop helped participants decide whether tax-exempt status is right for them and guided them through the filing process. Board development and consortium membership were also discussed.

Joseph Kroll of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) discussed the benefits of becoming a tax-exempt organization, how to avoid an IRS audit, and certain trouble areas. Don Cheney of Kiemle and Hagood Company spoke about state requirements and building an executive board. Marina Pavlov of the Florida Association of Nonprofit Organizations addressed the importance of running a nonprofit like a business. Thaddeus Miles of MassIMPACT addressed criminal checks and audits.

Creating Economic Opportunities and Wealth-Building Strategies for Residents

The path to self-sufficiency and homeownership often requires more than steady employment. There are many resources available to help residents build for their future. This workshop explored opportunities to help residents achieve the American dream. Participants learned about Earned Income Tax Credits, Individual Development Accounts, and other economic opportunities for which residents may be eligible. Carol Quiller of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) spoke about the Earned Income Tax Credit. Dorothy Inman-Johnson and Anita Morrell from the Capital Area Community Action Agency discussed how to create economic independence, forming a family self-sufficiency program, and addressing the real needs of lowincome families and communities. Carol Crowell of the Enterprise Foundation stressed the importance of building economic capacity.

The Business of Managing Tax-Exempt Status

Tax-exempt status has numerous benefits, but many nonprofit managers do not know that there are reporting requirements that must be met annually and business considerations that can impact a center's tax-exempt status. Participants learned how to protect their tax exemption and manage their nonprofit status.

Emily Furlong of the Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Center discussed the importance of contacting non-profit management specialists when dealing with tax-exempt status. Ms. Furlong gave advice on the importance of following bylaws and responding to the funders' needs. Joe Diehl of Digital Promise spoke about internal controls, such as keeping funds separate, and determining clear staff roles and responsibilities.

Creating Opportunities for Immigrant Communities

Creating an inclusive environment in a Neighborhood Networks center often requires cultural sensitivities and creative approaches to help immigrant communities overcome barriers to employment and citizenship. This workshop focused on developing effective programming and services for immigrant populations.

Westy Egmont of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants discussed activities that encourage cultural integration and the importance of cultural sensitivity. Becky Foy of the CWA-CAYCE Learning Center spoke about the important steps in making a multicultural community program successful, such as asking questions and finding community groups that interact with a specific culture.

Strategies for Engaging Residents

Resident volunteers. Waiting lists for classes. Increased participation at Neighborhood Networks events. These things happen daily at successful centers across the country. This workshop shined a spotlight on effective strategies for engaging residents in center programs and operations.



Elmer Stanley of Project Hope spoke about why it is important to engage residents, what center staff need to contribute to the process, and the importance of being a good communicator. He also discussed respecting cultures and always developing a "next step." Deborah Backus of the Castle Square Tenants Organization discussed why it is necessary to ensure residents feel included and the benefits of establishing resident committees.

Community Enterprises

Sassy Salsa from the Village, calendars, graphics, greeting cards, and glycerin soap are a few examples of community enterprises established by Neighborhood Networks centers across the country to generate revenues that support their centers and provide scholarships and educational funds for youth. In addition to building a new funding stream, these enterprises help build community. Participants learned how to develop a successful venture.

Bob Shephard of SCORE spoke about the resources available through SCORE for Neighborhood Networks centers interested in starting community enterprises. Mr. Shephard shared resources that are available nationwide.

Dave Parker of the National Center for Social Entrepreneurs introduced the concept of social enterprise and how it fits with the objectives of the Neighborhood Networks Initiative to make residents more selfsufficient. Mr. Parker discussed the steps involved in establishing a social enterprise, how to decide whether a social enterprise would be appropriate, and models of community enterprises. He also explained the benefits of social enterprises, including building financial responsibility among community residents, raising funds for the center, and creating jobs.

Jamie Spinello and Katie Thomas of Phoenix Family Housing Corporation shared the success story of the Sassy Salsa and glycerin soap enterprises that support Yarco Neighborhood Networks centers. Attendees were told how the enterprises started and evolved, and the benefits of these enterprises were explained as well as how they have overcome related challenges along the way.

Technology Planning

As a multi-service learning center, it is important that Neighborhood Networks centers effectively employ technology to support their programs and services. Technology planning assesses a center's current programs, services, and capacity; identifies technologies (both hardware and software) that will increase a center's capacity; and develops a plan to acquire, install, and utilize those technologies to advance a center's mission. This workshop provided instruction on creating a technology plan for Neighborhood Networks centers.

Derrick Gilbert of BCT Partners and John Lorance of CompuMentor told participants why technology planning is important to Neighborhood Networks centers. They covered the steps and considerations involved in

technology planning and technology best practices. Paul Ly of Bayview Foundation, Inc. discussed the technology plan that he wrote for the grant his center recently won from the Beaumont Foundation.

Transition Planning

Change is inevitable in any organization. Neighborhood Networks centers are no different. This workshop helped property owners/managers and center staff prepare for transitions by discussing



how to reduce transition time, ensure that institutional knowledge is retained, and maintain programs and services during the transition period.

Troy Chapman of the Support Center for Non Profit Management discussed the different phases of change, how to manage change, and interim positions. He emphasized the importance of team meetings for management staff and that transition staff must communicate with each other.

Making Your Mark with Mature Learners

More and more, mature learners are retooling for reentry into the workforce and embracing technology as a tool to provide access to information and connect them to their families and lifelong friends. This session taught participants how to use Neighborhood Networks centers to make their mark with mature learners in their community.

Michael Pierce of Generations on Line spoke about how his organization provides seniors the opportunity to become technologically literate. Hedy Bass and Joan Hansen of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Orange County discussed the potential of Baby Boomers in relation to RSVP. Karen Heppler of G&B Real Estate Services and Kris Martin of the Full Utility Neighborhood Networks Computer Center addressed the issue of loneliness in the senior community. They discussed how technology can empower seniors.

Write it Right: Tips and Tools for Grant Writing Success

The art and science of grant writing was explored in this workshop. Professional grant writers discussed strategies for identifying grant opportunities, conducting research to determine if a grant opportunity is right for a center, preparing a grant proposal, and conducting the appropriate follow-up activities.

Renee Bourque of Bright Star Grant Consultants presented the basics of grant writing. Ms. Bourque's presentation discussed the basic model of a grant, and included information on grantseeking and determining whether the organization has the capacity to implement the selected grant. She also spoke about possible partners for grants and how to develop a letter of inquiry.

Connecting Your Center to Community Volunteers

Neighborhood Networks centers often use volunteers to expand their staffing capacity. But where do you find them? How do you manage their time and responsibilities? This workshop provided successful strategies for recruiting, managing, and recognizing volunteers.

Rebecca Quinn of the Heart of Florida United Way Volunteer Center discussed how to connect a Neighborhood Networks center to another nonprofit, the importance of volunteers, and how centers should assess the need of volunteers. She also addressed proper supervision and recognizing volunteers.

Financial Literacy

Smart money management helps residents plan for their future. Opening bank accounts, balancing checkbooks, credit counseling, and financial planning are important tools to help families achieve financial independence. This workshop discussed how to teach residents about money management.

Donnell Byrd and Jasmin Franjul of UniRush Financial Services spoke about understanding credit and Fair Isaac and Credit Company (FICO). Linda Pichler of the Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Central Florida and the Gulf Coast discussed budgeting and how to prevent a potential crisis. Shirley Erazo of Bank of America focused on education and how credit impacts people's lives.

Educational Programs from Preschool to High School

Neighborhood Networks centers serve a variety of educational needs. From preschool to high school and beyond, Neighborhood Networks centers help with school readiness, homework, GED and college preparatory programs, and much more. This workshop presented successful models for providing education programs that centers can replicate.

James Ryan of J. Ryan Solutions, Inc. presented examples of how his community technology center in the Greater Boston Area creates programs of interest to children. Craig Knudsvig of the Grand Forks Housing Authority discussed intergenerational programs, afterschool programs, and supporting education. Teree Caldwell-Johnson of the Oakridge Neighborhood Networks Learning Center spoke about running a center for an ethnically diverse community. Cindy Laing Rittgers of the O'Connor Square Learning Center shared information about programs, data collection and management, and making programs more effective.

Planning for Fundraising Success

Funds to support a Neighborhood Networks center's programs and operations can come from a variety of sources—grants, special events, individual donors, and partners. This workshop guided participants through the process of developing a comprehensive fundraising plan and provided practical tips for securing financial support from diversified sources.

Sonya Garcia Ulibarri of the Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training spoke about the principles and strategies of fundraising. She discussed how to set goals and plan for an event, and reminded the audience to be feasible and flexible in fundraising strategies.

Make it Fabulous!

Lights, camera, action! Participants learned how to plan that fabulous special event as a fundraiser or as an activity for Neighborhood Networks Week. Food, flowers, funding, and more were discussed to show participants how to shine the spotlight on special events.

Sonya Manners of the Dartmouth Square Neighborhood Networks Computer Learning Center discussed the make up of a fabulous event. She spoke about knowing your event and your goal, as well as the people you invite. Bill Knight of Events by Knight emphasized budgets, identifying markets, and considering the visual aspects of an event.

Minimum Investment. Maximum Returns.

Neighborhood Networks centers help a property owner's bottom line—they can increase a property's profitability while enhancing the property's profile in the community. Centers are a valued-added amenity for residents. At this session, property owners and managers shared insights and lessons learned from achieving maximum returns from their investments in Neighborhood Networks centers.

Patricia Bowen of AIMCO spoke about minimum investments, partnerships, and remembering an overall sense of community. Joe Errigo of CommonBond Communities discussed the return on investment achieved by operating a Neighborhood Networks center.

Market-Driven Approaches to Workforce Development

Creating employment programs that are responsive to the local job market increases the likelihood that residents will find related jobs upon program completion. Participants learned how to assess their local job market, create cooperative job-placement agreements with potential employers, and create workforce development programs that yield results.

Bob Giloth of The Annie E. Casey Foundation discussed workforce development, training center staff, and the importance of starting off small. Marty Miles of Public/Private Ventures spoke about business relationships, using a market approach, and understanding customers' needs.

U.S. Department of Education (ED) Train-the-Trainer

Providing access to educational opportunities is one of the main objectives of Neighborhood Networks centers, and encouraging youth to pursue higher education is a key component of that goal. ED has made available an abundance of financial aid information to Neighborhood Networks centers to help make this goal a reality.

Hazel Mingo of the U.S. Department of Education/Federal Student Aid discussed valuable resources that can be shared with students and their parents. In this train-the-trainer, Ms. Mingo prepared Neighborhood Networks centers to serve as financial aid resources for their communities and discussed postsecondary education, first generation college students, and eligibility for home-schooling. She also discussed the Higher Education Act and available federal money.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Train-the-Trainer

Neighborhood Networks is much more than technology training. Community technology centers can provide a number of needed services to the community, such as financial literacy programs. The FDIC Money Smart curriculum helps individuals build financial knowledge and confidence, and use banking services effectively. In this session, attendees were provided with the direction and materials required to establish a tailored financial literacy program at their center.

John Olsen of the FDIC spoke about the FDIC Money Smart software. He highlighted the features of the software, its intended audience, and ways of using the software to improve Neighborhood Networks centers.

NASA Train-the-Trainer

Do you know about NASA's curriculum for educational programs? During this workshop, participants learned from Neighborhood Networks centers that have formed partnerships with NASA. The workshop also provided participants with information on how they can work with NASA to bring exciting, interactive programs to their Neighborhood Networks center. Each participant received a NASA activities kit as part of the workshop.

Stephenie Lievense of NASA discussed the importance of creativity in designing programs. Michelle Viotti of NASA spoke about the history of NASA's partnership with Neighborhood Networks. She spoke about NASA's excitement about pilot programs for Neighborhood Networks.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Train-the-Trainer

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is a major source for workforce development information that can be applied directly to meet the needs of residents. The many online features available on the DOL Web site can assist unemployed and underemployed residents. Participants found out more about specific DOL online tools and resources customized exclusively for Neighborhood Networks in this informative train-the-trainer session.

Allison Watts of DOL spoke about the Career One-Stop and its importance to Neighborhood Networks. She highlighted more than 200 services for community- based organizations.

APPENOICES



Appendix A. Neighborhood Networks 2005 Recognition Ceremony Award Recipients

The Neighborhood Networks Recognition Ceremony paid tribute to the special contributions of the remarkable individuals and outstanding organizations that have supported Neighborhood Networks over the past decade.

A total of 33 awards were presented. Nominations were requested from all Neighborhood Networks centers, consortia, partners, property owners and managers, and HUD staff. More than 160 nominations in eight award categories were received.

Award Categories and Winners

Beacon of Light Award—honors a Multifamily Neighborhood Networks center that made a significant and measurable impact on the residents of the HUD property and the surrounding community.

- Gateway at Buckman Road, Alexandria, Virginia
- Gateway at Edgewood Terrace, Washington, D.C.
- Friendship Village Neighborhood Networks Center, Kansas City, Missouri

Living The Dream Award—honors a Multifamily property resident who has taken advantage of Neighborhood Networks center resources and made significant advances toward self-improvement and self-sufficiency.

- Claudia Washington, Restoration Towers, Detroit, Michigan
- Rosilyn Rembert, Smith-Keys Computer Learning Center, Texarkana, Arkansas

Neighborhood Networks Community Ambassador Award—honors a Multifamily property resident whose actions promote a positive image of the Neighborhood Networks center on the property and/ or in the community.

- Lakeitah Graves, Operation PEACE Center, Atlanta, Georgia
- Michelle Boise, St. Anthony Plaza Learning Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Catalyst for Community Change Award—honors a Multifamily Neighborhood Networks center staff member or volunteer whose dedicated commitment and outreach efforts have brought about measurable change in the center, on the property where the center is located, and/or in the community.

- Engrid Gibbs, Operation PEACE Center, Atlanta, Georgia
- Kim Timms, Oasis Neighborhood Networks Center, Fort Worth, Texas
- Mary Cabriele, Gateway at Buckman Road, Alexandria, Virginia
- Thomas Hoffman, College Arms Center, Palatka, Florida
- Victoria Fernandez, Summercrest Community Center, National City, California

Champion for Change Award—honors a Multifamily property owner or manager who has demonstrated a commitment to the Neighborhood Networks initiative by providing resources and support for a sustained period of time.

- Interstate Realty Management Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Wingate Management Company, Atlanta, Georgia
- Albert Browne, Community Preservation and Development Corporation, Washington, D.C.
- Carmen Porco, American Baptist Homes of the Midwest, Madison, Wisconsin
- Craig Knudsvig, Grand Forks Housing Authority, Grand Forks, North Dakota
- Westminster Company, Greensboro, North Carolina

HUD Neighborhood Networks Coordinator Hallmark Service Award—honors a HUD Neighborhood Networks Coordinator who is actively involved with center programs and/or serves as an active resource for Neighborhood Networks centers.

 William Miecuna, Project Manager, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, New York, **New York Office**

Partner in Progress Award—honors a local partner who has consistently contributed resources to a Neighborhood Networks center, allowing for greater access to opportunity for Multifamily property residents.

- Duval County Public Schools, Jacksonville, Florida
- Georgia State University, Office of Community Service Learning, Atlanta, Georgia

Partner in Progress Award—National Partner

- NASA, Washington, D.C.
- U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.
- U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.
- Kidz Online, Herndon, Virginia

Community Connector Award — recognizes a Neighborhood Networks consortium that has successfully leveraged its resources to increase the capacity of member centers to connect communities and create opportunities.

Digital Promise, Seattle, Washington

Director's Award—recognizes HUD staff that have been instrumental in furthering the Neighborhood **Networks Initiative.**

- ◆ Charles Famuliner, Multifamily Program Center Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Richmond, Virginia
- Shirley Machonis, Project Manager, Neighborhood Networks Staff, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Sarah Richey-Johnson, Program Manager, Neighborhood Networks Staff, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Tarrie Eckhart, Service Coordinator SuperNOFA Lottery Grants Program, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Seattle, Washington Office
- Donald Freeman, Housing Contract Services Specialist, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Los Angeles, California Office

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